

REMARKS

This Application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Final Office Action mailed March 31, 2006. At the time of the Final Office Action, Claims 1-18 were pending in this Application. Claims 1-3, 5, 6, 8, 10-16 and 18 were rejected and Claims 4, 7, 9 and 17 were objected to. Claims 1, 9 and 13 have been amended to further define various features of Applicants' invention. Applicants have cancelled Claims 4 and 17 without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and favorable action in this case.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 4, 7, 9 and 17 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants submit the Independent Claim 1 has been amended to include all of the limitation of allowable Claim 4 and any intervening claims. Additionally, Claim 9 has been rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim (previously submitted Claim 1) and any intervening claims. Applicants have also amended Claim 13 to include all of the limitations of allowable Claim 17.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that Independent Claims 1, 9 and 13 have now been placed in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and full allowance of Claims 1, 9 and 13 and Claims 2-3, 5-8, 10-12, 14-16 and 18 which depend therefrom.

Rejections

Claims 13-15 stand rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Reissue Patent No. 29,371 issued to George De Bortoli et al. ("De Bortoli"). Claims 13-16 and 18 stand rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,193,341 issued to Denise Eizadkhah et al. ("Eizadkhah").

Claims 1-3, 5, 6 and 10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over De Bortoli in view of the prior art disclosed by Applicants. Claims 1-3, 5, 6 and 10-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Eizadkhah in view of the

prior art disclosed by Applicants. Claim 8 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Eizadkhah as applied above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,306,077 issued to Thomas R. Trevaskis ("Trevaskis").

As discussed above, Independent Claims 1, 9 and 13 (and Claims 2-3, 5-8, 10-12, 14-16 and 18 which depend therefrom) have been place in condition for allowance, obviating the present rejections. Applicants request reconsideration, withdrawal of the rejections and full allowance of remaining Claims 1-18, as amended.

CONCLUSION

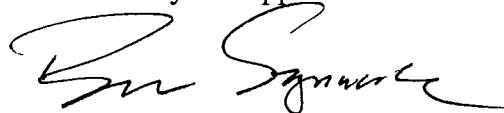
Applicants have now made an earnest effort to place this case in condition for examination. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application and allowance of the pending claims.

Applicants believe no fees are due, however, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 02-0383 of Baker Botts L.L.P. in order to effectuate this filing.

If there are any matters concerning this Application that may be cleared up in a telephone conversation, please contact Applicants' attorney at 512.322.2548.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: 4/20/2006

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